

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1140

JOINT EMBASSY/USIS MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR IC

SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN MP AND ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE ISSUE

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. WHEN NORWEGIAN LABOR PARTY MP PAUL THYNESS VISITED ICELAND AS A MEMBER OF A NATO PARLIAMENTARIANS DELEGATION, HE SAID HE INTENDED TO RAISE IN THE NEXT NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS THE IMPORTANCE TO NORWEGIAN SECURITY OF THE ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE. ANY EXCERPTS FROM THIS DEBATE, IF IT TAKES PLACE, ARE REQUESTED BY REYKJAVIK. END SUMMARY.

2. TWO NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS, PAUL THYNESS, LABOR, AND ALFRED HENNINGSEN, CONSERVATIVE, WERE AMONG THE FORTY NATO PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO VISITED ICELAND SEPT 11-12. BOTH WERE TOLD BY MANY THEY MET HERE THAT EXPRESSIONS OF NORWEGIAN SUPPORT FOR THE NATO BASE AT KEFLAVIK COULD BE INFLUENTIAL WITH CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF ICELANDIC OPINION. MR. THYNESS, WHO CONTINUES AS A MEMBER OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT, TOLD A USIS OFFICER THAT HE INTENDED TO RAISE THIS ISSUE AT THE NEXT FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEBATE IN THE STORTING.

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3. MR. THYNESS HIMSELF, A NORTH NORWEGIAN WHO HAS SPECIALIZED IN SECURITY MATTERS, BELIEVES THE CONTINUED FUNCTIONING OF THE ICELANDIC DEFENSE FORCE TO BE VITAL FOR NORWEGIAN SECURITY. HE MENTIONED SOME EXASPERATION THAT ICELANDERS WHOM HE HAD MET HAD DISMISSED NORWEGIAN CONCERN "BECAUSE NORWAY DOES NOT HAVE FOREIGN TROOPS ON ITS SOIL, AND THEREFORE HAS NO RIGHT TO ADVISE US". MR. THYNESS SAID HE POINTED OUT TO THESE ICELANDERS THREE RELEVANT POINTS: (1) NORWAY HAS ITS OWN MILITARY DEFENSE FORCE, (2) FOREIGN NATO UNITS REGULARLY EXERCISE IN NORWAY, (3) THE STATIONING NOW OF FOREIGN TROOPS ON NORWEGIAN SOIL UNDERSTANDABLY WOULD BE VIEWED BY THE SOVIET UNION AS "ESCALATION".

4. IF MR. THYNESS DOES RAISE THIS MATTER IN THE STORTING, AND IF A DEBATE THEN ENSUES, REYKJAVIK REQUESTS (NO TRANSLATION WILL BE NECESSARY) A COPY OF THE RECORD OF THIS DEBATE, AS WELL AS ANY RELEVANT EDITORIAL COMMENT WHICH SUPPORTS THE CONTINUATION OF THE ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE.

5. REYKJAVIK POINTS OUT THAT ALL ICELANDIC MEDIA RECEIVE THE SAME NORWEGIAN TELEGRAM BUREAU NEWS FILE AS RECEIVED BY NORWEGIAN MEDIA. ANY NORWEGIAN STORIES CONCERNING ICELAND AND THE DEFENSE FORCE WHICH ARE CARRIED ON NTB CONSEQUENTLY REACH ICELANDIC EDITORS.
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